

# Meet Your Breeders

Mary Lou Kenworthy      Kenset Basenjis

## 1. How did you get started in Basenjis?

Horses were my first love and then Collies. My first pure bred dog was a Collie and when I lost him I couldn't find another of his quality. Then I found some great Shetland Sheepdogs and bred and showed them for a while. I kept seeing pictures of Basenjis in Dog World and was fascinated by them – they reminded me of little horses. I wondered if they were as smart as they looked. It didn't take me long to find out they were even smarter and that they could get under your skin in a hurry. I got the first Basenji for my husband to use as a hunting dog because I was tired of picking burrs out of my Sheltie's coat. He was a great hunting dog – go figure. It balanced out when one of my Basenjis herded sheep.

## 2. Why did you start breeding? When?

I was always fascinated with genetics. The idea of being able to change animals and hopefully improve them inspired me to breed. I bred half-bred horses and Shelties before concentrating on Basenjis. I bred my first Basenjis in the early 1960s under my farm name, Krazy 'K'. My name was Kauffman at the time. My early litters were very educational; I learned about everything I didn't want in my breeding program from them. After a divorce I moved from Pennsylvania to New York state in the early 1970s. Since I was starting over I changed my kennel name to 'Kenset' and eventually I went back to my maiden name, Kenworthy. I had found the bitch that was to be the foundation of 'Kenset', Ro-Genes Tri Tonga Freckles. Kenset Basenjis was born in the foothills of the Catskill Mountains, several years later was moved back to PA, and in 1987 was moved to Georgia.

## 3. What persons influenced you most strongly?

Actually it was my Sheltie breeder friends who influenced me the most. They were very knowledgeable about breeding and showing and what I learned from them carried over to the Basenjis. The Basenjis themselves taught me the idiosyncrasies of the breed.

## 4. What have you seen improve in Basenjis over the years?

Temperament is the biggest improvement; and feet, tail sets and toplines are better for the most part.

## 5. What do you think today's Basenji breeders need to pay special attention to?

Health, soundness, and type. Too many Basenjis today have straight fronts with upright forearms that place the whole front assemblies too far forward on the body. Fronts and rears are sometimes out of balance with each other. Many rears are over-angulated and too far behind the body. These faults make the Basenji appear rectangular instead of square. They depart from the early basenjis and from the Standard.

## 6. What advice do you have to a new breeder getting started?

Study the history of the breed and look at pictures of the early Basenjis. Knowing the breed's origin and purpose will help you to understand the Standard for the breed. Study the Standard carefully and often. Look at many different Basenjis and see if they relate to the standard. Not all the Basenjis that are winning in the ring are correct to the Standard. Don't be afraid to use your own judgment. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Listen carefully to everyone but believe no one; digest everything you hear and then decide for yourself what is correct. Don't form such hard

opinions that you can not change them later after you have gained more knowledge. Form a picture in your mind of the ideal Basenji based on the Standard. Study pedigrees to find what lines are producing your ideal Basenji's type. That will be a good place to start. Be prepared to be responsible for everything you breed.

## 7. What dogs you've seen or owned stand out as outstanding examples of the breed and why?

The following Basenjis come to mind:

Ch Jamila's Azizi Re; FCh Ch Asari's Ti-Jii; Ch Dogo Birocco of Sun Diata; Ch Jato J'Mira; Ch Blucrest Dreamtime at Timar; Ch Candu's Tri'd 'N' Tru; Ch Khajah's Aurora of Luzambo; and Am/Can Ch Conamore's Sun And Jasmine. Besides these, a lot of the Arubmec Basenjis were good representatives of the Basenji Standard. All of these Basenjis were of correct type and/or had something to offer the breed.

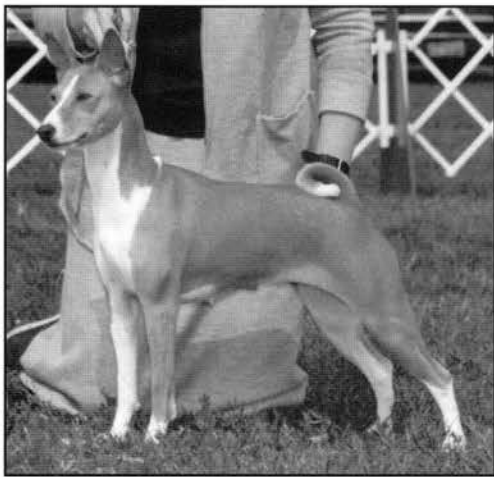
Following are my own Basenjis:

**Ch Kenset The Eighth Wonder, BBHR – 'Little'** lived up to her name.



She arrived in a litter of eight and finished in eight shows, including four majors, one of which was won at Westminster. (Yes, there used to be regular classes – minus the puppy class – at the Garden.) Little was my first Bred-By Champion and is behind many of today's top winners and producers.

**Ch Kenset Small Wonder, FCh – 'Penny'** finished her Championship with three straight five-point majors in three days, including a Best of Opposite Sex over specials at the Basenji Club of Cincinnati Specialty. 'Penny' then traveled to Colorado for the Bi-Centennial Circuit where, four days later, she won Best Of Breed from the classes at the 1976 Basenji Club Of America Central Zone Regional Specialty (before Nationals). At that time a new champion could not be moved up until the owner received the certificate from AKC. 'Penny' was the first Specialty winner to earn an ASFA Field Championship. She also placed in the HOMBC



National Field Trial for scent hounds and I hunted with her. "Penny" was shown to several Bests of Opposite Sex at other Specialties and was never defeated in her sex. She also graduated 1st in her obedience class and was truly an "all around hound". 'Penny' produced two sons who contributed heavily to the Kenset

line. They were Ch. Kenset Age of Aquarius, SDHR and Ch Kenset The World On Fire, TT.

**Ch Kenset The World On Fire, TT – 'Jon'** did well in the ring but was bred



sparingly as I was still working on ridding my line of inherited problems. I wish now that I had used him more but he sired 'Lulu' – maybe that was all he needed to do.

**Ch Kenset Vesta O' Luzambo, FCh TT CGC, BBHR – 'Lulu'**, the love of

my life, contributed heavily to the Kenset family and is mostly responsible for the good health. She is the dam of 'Hans' and the grand dam of UACH U-CD Kenset Burning Brite O' Merit UD OANAJCGC, Can CD and winner of the DOG WORLD award in obedience.



**Ch Kenset Wayfarer From Asbah, FCh, SDHR – 'Prune'** a 'Penny'



grandson, finished at 11 months of age. He won BOB and 1st in Stud Dog at the 1985 B.C.O.A. National Specialty. He was the first, and so far the only, field titled basenji to win BOB at a B.C.O.A. National Specialty. Although he was used sparingly at stud, he was tied for top producer in 1986 and has sired 31 AKC Champions plus some Canadian Champions. His offspring account for over 30 performance titles including Bests In Field in US and Canada and High In Trial in obedience. More important than the quantity is the quality that this dog produced in conformation, performance ability, health and temperament. All his life he was checked and found free of all the basenji inherited diseases.

**Ch Kenset Butterflies Are Free – 'Freda'** is one of my all time favorite



bitches. She won the Bred-By-Exhibitor Bitch Class at the 1985 National Specialty after her litter brother had won the Bred-By Dog Class, and finished her championship from Bred-By. She is the grand-dam of 'Hans'. 'Freda' produce 'Hel'n' ▶

**Ch Kenset Hel'n Wheels FCh – 'Hel'n'** won BOB over a large B.C.O.A. Supported Entry in Georgia and won a Best-In-Field in lure coursing.



**Ch Kenset Carpe Diem – 'Curly'**, a 'Prune' x 'Freda' son, sired 'Hans'.



**Ch Kenset Made In The USA, SDHR – 'Hans'**, a 'Lulu' son, contributed great tempered show and coursing Basenjis to several breeding programs.



### **8. What do you feel are your most significant achievements with the breed?**

I have spent nearly half a century developing a sound, healthy line that produces consistently and can compete in conformation and performance sports. Most importantly, they have been great companions for their owners, many of whom have owned two, three, or more of them consecutively.

### **9. Anything else you would like to say?**

I took many of my basenjis through obedience classes (all breeds) during the week. All graduated first in their classes. My only regret is that I never had time to compete in obedience. My time, besides earning a living, was spent in breeding and, on weekends, I was showing and/or coursing. While I will not be breeding many more litters there are several younger breeders who are carrying on from the Kenset line so my efforts will be preserved in future generations.

### **10. What is your chosen kennel name? How did you choose this name? Why? Does it have a meaning? Any other information you would like to provide?**

My kennel name is KENSET. A friend suggested it when I was looking for a new kennel. 'Kenset' is an Egyptian 'place like Heaven' – appropriate since I had just left the other place. We are fortunate to now have a marker test for Fanconi syndrome. I have found that Fanconi and PRA tend to run in the same lines. This test should help us to breed healthier Basenjis in future years. ♦

# Kenset

## Basenjis

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